

Remedial education in higher education institutions

The role of remedial courses in higher education institutions has been the subject of ongoing debate among policymakers and educators. Some view remedial courses as a way to expand educational opportunities for unprepared students, while others feel that remedial courses should be discouraged because precollege-level courses have no place in the college curriculum. The percentage of institutions offering remedial courses and the percentage of freshmen who enroll in them provide a snapshot of the current availability of and demand for these courses at higher education institutions.

- The percentage of freshmen enrolled in remedial courses and the percentage of institutions offering such courses were similar in 1989 and 1995.
- In 1995, freshmen were more likely to enroll in a remedial mathematics course than in a remedial reading or writing course. In fact, from 1989 to 1995, the percentage of freshmen who enrolled in remedial mathematics courses increased, while the percentage who enrolled in remedial reading or writing courses was similar.
- In 1995, freshmen in public 2-year colleges were far more likely to enroll in remedial courses than their peers in public 4-year institutions (41 versus 22 percent).
- In 1995, almost all public 2-year institutions offered remedial writing and mathematics courses, while about three-quarters of public 4-year institutions offered remedial courses in these subjects. Half of private 4-year institutions offered remedial writing and mathematics courses.
- In 1995, a larger percentage of institutions with high minority enrollment offered remedial reading, writing, and mathematics courses than institutions with low minority enrollment.

Percentage of freshmen enrolled in remedial courses, by subject, control and type of institution, and minority enrollment: Fall 1989 and 1995

| Subject | Fall 1989 | Fall 1995 | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------------------|-----|
| | | Total | Public | | Private | | Minority enrollment* | |
| | | | 2-year | 4-year | 2-year | 4-year | High | Low |
| Reading, writing, or mathematics | 30 | 29 | 41 | 22 | 26 | 13 | 43 | 26 |
| Reading | 13 | 13 | 20 | 8 | 11 | 7 | 25 | 11 |
| Writing | 16 | 17 | 25 | 12 | 18 | 8 | 29 | 15 |
| Mathematics | 21 | 24 | 34 | 18 | 23 | 9 | 35 | 21 |

Percentage of higher education institutions offering remedial courses, by subject, control and type of institution, and minority enrollment: Fall 1989 and 1995

| Subject | Fall 1989 | Fall 1995 | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------------------|-----|
| | | Total | Public | | Private | | Minority enrollment* | |
| | | | 2-year | 4-year | 2-year | 4-year | High | Low |
| Reading, writing, or mathematics | 74 | 78 | 100 | 81 | 63 | 63 | 94 | 76 |
| Reading | 58 | 57 | 99 | 52 | 29 | 34 | 87 | 53 |
| Writing | 65 | 71 | 99 | 71 | 61 | 52 | 85 | 70 |
| Mathematics | 68 | 72 | 99 | 78 | 62 | 51 | 93 | 70 |

* Institutions with high minority enrollment are defined as those in which total student enrollment, excluding nonresident aliens, is less than 50 percent white.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Postsecondary Education Quick Information System, *Remedial Education at Higher Education Institutions in Fall 1995, 1996*.

Table S29(a) Standard errors for the first text table in *Indicator 29*

| Subject | Fall 1989 | 1995 | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------------------|-----|
| | | Total | Public | | Private | | Minority enrollment | |
| | | | 2-year | 4-year | 2-year | 4-year | High | Low |
| Reading, writing, or mathematics | 1.4 | 0.8 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 5.4 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 0.8 |
| Reading | 0.7 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 2.5 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 0.6 |
| Writing | 0.8 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 5.3 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 0.6 |
| Mathematics | 1.0 | 0.8 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 4.8 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 0.8 |

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Postsecondary Education Quick Information System, *Remedial Education at Higher Education Institutions in Fall 1995, 1996*.

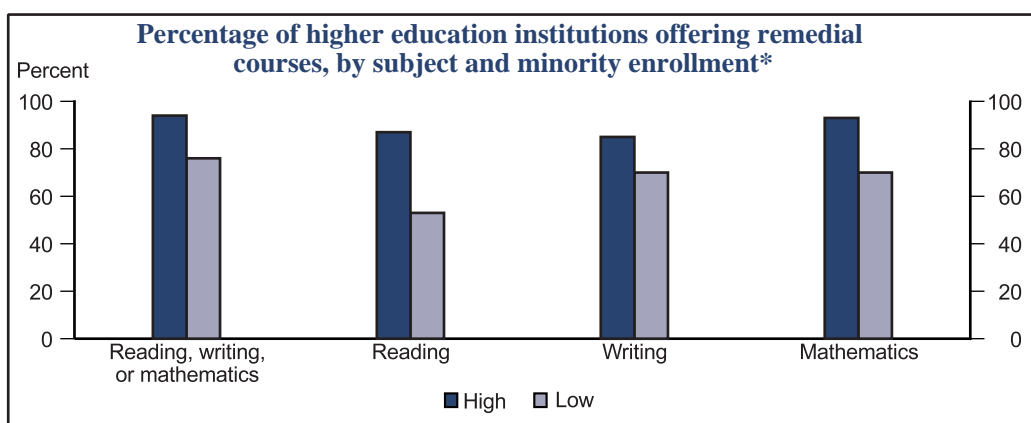
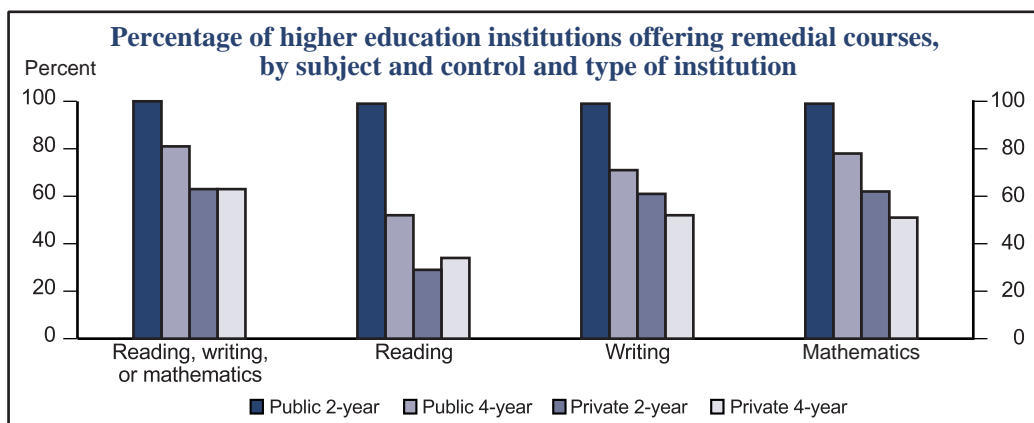
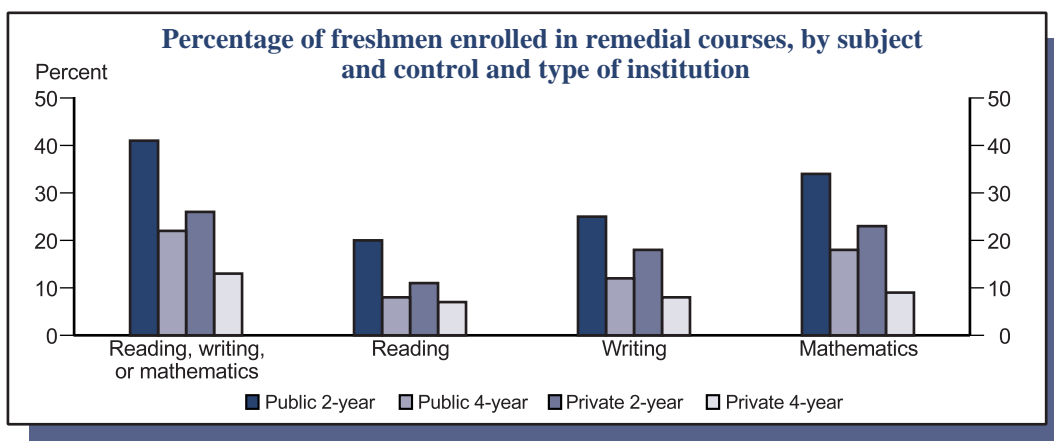
Table S29(b) Standard errors for the second text table in *Indicator 29*

| Subject | Fall 1989 | 1995 | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------------------|-----|
| | | Total | Public | | Private | | Minority enrollment | |
| | | | 2-year | 4-year | 2-year | 4-year | High | Low |
| Reading, writing, or mathematics | 2.1 | 1.7 | — | 2.6 | 6.8 | 3.9 | 2.0 | 1.9 |
| Reading | 2.3 | 1.6 | 0.7 | 3.1 | 5.5 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 1.7 |
| Writing | 2.2 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 2.7 | 6.8 | 4.2 | 3.4 | 1.8 |
| Mathematics | 2.2 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 2.7 | 7.0 | 3.5 | 2.1 | 1.7 |

— Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Postsecondary Education Quick Information System, *Remedial Education at Higher Education Institutions in Fall 1995, 1996*.

Remedial education in higher education: Fall 1995



* Institutions with high minority enrollment are defined as those in which total student enrollment, excluding nonresident aliens, is less than 50 percent white.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Postsecondary Education Quick Information System, *Remedial Education at Higher Education Institutions in Fall 1995, 1996*.